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ABSTRACT

These environmental education materials include both out-of-classroom and in-classroom experiences. The activities emphasize seven major goals including language skills, number skills, social skills, motor skills, science, and attention span. There are eight coded topical areas: (1) air; (2) animals; (3) games; (4) light; (5) plants; (6) seasons; (7) soil; and (8) water. Each topical area contains a variety of activities related to the general theme. The activities are described on separate cards and are written for the teacher. Each card contains the following: (1) a title; (2) a purpose; (3) suggested directions; (4) a materials list; and (5) hints and instructions for the teacher. The materials were tested with trainable mentally retarded students. (RH)

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TRY THESE

WE HAVE!

Environmental Education Activities

for the

Trainable Mentally Retarded

Outdoor Ecological Laboratory
Marian College
3200 Cold Spring Road
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2

SE 021 720

INTRODUCTION

We learn from and about the environment in many ways. For the Special Child learning experiences must be concrete, direct, specific and it is important that they emphasize active involvement.

These environmental education materials include both out-of-classroom and in-classroom experiences. It is hoped that they are easily adaptable and transferable. The activities emphasize these major goals:

1. Developing and promoting awareness of the relationships between children and the natural world.
2. Developing and reinforcing basic language skills.
3. Developing and reinforcing basic number skills and ideas.
4. Developing and promoting social skills which emphasize communication, following directions, group membership, dependability and learning how to become independent.
5. Developing gross and fine motor skills.
6. Developing basic ideas about science and the natural world.
7. Providing experiences to help increase attention span.

ABOUT THE CARDS

The activities fall into eight topical areas. There is also a User's Guide. Each of the eight topical areas is represented by a color.

Air	Green	Seasons	Orange
Animals	Gray	Soil	Tan
Games	Pink	Water	Blue
Light	Yellow	User's Guide	White
Plants	Lime		

Each topical area contains a variety of activities related to the general theme. The activities are described on separate cards and are written for the teacher.

Each card contains: (1) a short, descriptive mini-title in the upper-right-hand corner, e.g. Troubled Waters, (2) a purpose for the activity in the upper-left-hand corner, e.g. awareness, (3) Try This, an activity description which gives a few basic direction and describes what the child will do, (4) You Need, a list of materials and (5) where necessary, hints and instructions for the teacher. Some of the cards suggest activity variations and extensions. These are included under "More."

WHO WE ARE

This packet of cards was developed and field tested by:

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Dr. Dennis E. Clark, Director
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FEEDBACK--CIRCLE ONE AND MAIL IT TO US

These cards are: Very Useful 1 2 3 4 5 Not Useful

These cards are useful in promoting awareness:
Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

These cards are useful in promoting mathematical skills:
Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

These cards are useful in promoting language arts:
Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

These cards are useful in promoting socialization skills:
Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

What problems did you have in using these cards? (Use the back.)

What changes would you recommend in these cards? (Use the back.)

Outdoor Ecological Laboratory
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Motor: Fine

Up, Up and Away

Try this:

Demonstrate air currents using airplanes.

1. Children make airplanes out of paper.

2. Fly airplanes outside.

More:

Use different weights of paper. Fly on different types of day--calm, windy, cool, warm.

You need:

Paper - 8½ x11 inches

Social

Nature's Mobile

Try this:

The class should go on a walk collecting leaves, acorns, medium sized sticks, twigs, and small pebbles. Working together, use tempera paint to paint all of the items found in bright, vivid colors. Allow all of the painted items to dry. Using the medium size stick as a base, tie different lengths of cord string around it. Glue the painted items to the ends of the string, making a mobile. Suspend the mobile. The class should observe that the parts of the mobile are moved by the current of air.

You need:

String, tempera paint, pebbles, sticks, acorns, twigs, etc.

Hints:

Preparation for this activity should include a class discussion on working together cooperatively.

Motor: Gross

Falling Leaves

Try this:

Catch falling leaves in hands before they reach the ground.

More:

Catch leaves in paper bags.

You need:

Paper bags

Hints:

Autumn day with wind.

Science

Air Race

Try this:

Give players a piece of paper about 3 x 4 inches. Hold it flat on the palm of the hand and throw it. Mark spot where it falls.

Crumple same piece of paper. Throw it from palm of hand. Measure where it falls. What is the reason it went further than the flat piece of paper?

You need:

Paper
Piece of chalk

Hints:

Have all pieces of paper cut the same size. May be played by teams or individually.

Shapes in the Sky

Try this:

On a sunny, fluffy cloudy day, lay in the grass and look up at the sky. See if you can find different shapes in the clouds.

More:

What else do you see in the sky?

Science

Chart Making

Try this:

Design a small chart with space for each day of the week. Note and record the direction the school flag is flying daily. Stress the fact that the wind moves objects.

You need:

Sheet of paper
Pencil

Hints:

Walk to the flag pole and direct observation. Record information.

Motor: Sucking, Blowing

Soap Bubbles in the Wind

Try this:

1. Take the class outside to a level, grassy area.
2. Demonstrate blowing bubbles through the wand and point out the bubbles to the kids.
3. Encourage the kids to look at the bubbles and try to catch (or pop) them.
4. Let the children use the wand and blow bubbles themselves.

You need:

Soap bubbles and instrument to blow with

Motor: Folding, Fanning

Simple Fan

Try this:

1. Instruct the children to fold a piece of heavy paper in half.
2. Demonstrate to the children the fanning motion and let them feel the air on their faces.
3. Each child then attempts to wave the paper in front of his own face.

More:

The fans may be made more complex if children are adept at folding.

This could also be done with a large green leaf.

You need:

8 x 11 paper (construction or wrapping paper)

Motor

Ecology Picture

Try this:

Student can construct an attractive picture of natural materials suitable as a gift or decoration for the classroom.

Rub wood well with crayon, and polish with facial tissue.

Glue 8 inch piece of yarn down center and 6 inch piece of yarn across center.

Place small amount of glue in each section.

Put seeds on glue.

Put hanger on back.

You need:

Piece of wood 6 inches by 8 inches
Crayons
Tissue
Yarn
Four kinds of seeds
Glue
Hanger

Try this:

Take the class on a nature walk to pick dandelions in seed. Let the children blow on the picked dandelions. Can they pick them without having them fall apart? Maybe they should blow on them without picking them. The class should observe and discuss how the air current carries the seeds from the dandelions.

More:

Use milkweed pods in the fall.

You need:

Dandelions

Hints:

The teacher should check the area to be used for the walk for the supply of available dandelions and milkweed pods.

Try this:

1. Collect maple seeds.
2. Toss in air and watch them spin to ground.

You need:

Maple seeds

Try this:

Kite flying: Let each child have a turn. If you have aides, fly several kites.

You need:

Kite and string

Hints:

A windy day!

Motor

Pin Wheel

Try this:

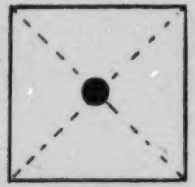
Cut 6 inch squares of construction paper. Draw lines to the red dot in the center. The children will cut on the lines provided. Stop cutting at red dot! The student can help the teacher put the pin wheel together by holding the straw while she sticks the pin into the clay which has been placed in the top of the straw.

You need:

Light weight paper, scissors, clay, straws, straight pins

Hints:

Pattern:



Try this:

1. Float cork in water.
2. Lower glass, mouth downward, over cork and push down several inches into water.
3. Note: Air takes up space. It will push the cork down and will not allow water to enter.

You need:

Dishpan or pail
Water
Cork
Glass drinking glass

Awareness

What Am I?

Try this:

Depending on the ability of the children--set out several pictures of animals. Pretend to be one of them. Ask the child to show you what animal you were imitating by picking out the picture of the animal.

More:

Turn it around and have the child act out an animal when shown a picture.

You need:

Animal pictures
Acting training not necessary!

Hints:

This is for non-verbal children.

Attending

Bird Feeder Outside My Window

Try this:

1. Place a bird feeder in a tree which is visible from the classroom window and explain that birds will eat there.
2. Call the children to the window when birds are feeding.
3. The children must be quiet and still so they don't scare the birds.
4. Have the children help put seed in the feeder when they are ready.

You need:

Bird feeder, bird seed, tree easily seen from the window

Hints:

Make or buy a bird feeder.

Science

Insect Display Box

Try this:
1. The inside of a stationery box can be painted, colored, covered with cloth or paper.
2. Arrange insects in box, then lift each one up and glue a small piece of sponge in place. Pin insect to sponge. Replace lid.
3. A string hanger may be taped to the back.

More:
1. Make a shell collection, gluing shells to the bottom of the box.
2. Make a seed collection, using cotton batting the size of the bottom of the box.

You need:

Insects, stationery boxes with clear lids, sponge, glue, pins, string and tape, magnifying glass.

Hints:
Cut sponge smaller than each insect, or let the pupils cut it.

Motor

Tuna Insect Cage

Try this:
Pour plaster of paris into a tuna fish can. Roll a piece of window screening and place it in the plaster of paris. Place a small branch into the plaster. Let ther plaster set. Use another tuna fish can for the top. Butterflies, insects and especially lightning bugs can be kept in the cage. Add fresh, moist leaves when you use it. If you are very quiet you can use a magnifying glass to watch the insects.

You need:

- Two tuna fish cans per student
- Wire screen, 12 x 14 inches
- Masking tape
- Small branches
- Magnifying glass
- Moist leaves

Hints:
Assemble all materials. Work quickly so plaster does not harden too soon.

Motor: Coordination

Simple Insect Net

Try this:

1. Bend a wire coat hanger into a rough circle.
2. Bend hanger hook so that it forms a tight loop and force it onto the handle.
3. Sew nylon net around wire. Net material should be from 2 to 3 feet long after you have knotted or tied it at the bottom.
4. Wrap wire around the connection between the handle and the loop.
5. Wrap this joint with masking or adhesive tape.
6. Use it!

You need:

Wire coat hangers; nylon netting or panty hose; needle; thread; a 1/2 inch wood dowel, approximately 3 feet long; wire; heavy tape; pliers.

Try this:

Have children name as many animals as they can that:

1. Have four legs.
2. Can fly.
3. Are more than one color.
4. Live in trees.
5. Live in holes.
6. Are only one color.

More:

Use teams and/or time limits.

Try this:

Go outside. Using different senses, have children determine whether people have been here before.

More:

Determine whether animals have been here. Use tracks, burrows, holes in the ground, nests, etc.

Suet Stick

Try this:

Many birds need suet and fat during cold weather. Obtain small straight log or piece of wood. Bore holes through wood and pack holes with a mixture of suet, seed and peanut butter. Put eye screw at top and suspend from a tree. Watch!

You need:

Small log
Brace and bit
Eye screw
Strong cord
Suet mixture

Try this:

Arrange a field trip to the zoo. Identify each animal to the child by name, sound it makes, and/or special characteristics.

More:

Use the outdoors as a zoo. Squirrels, birds, dogs, etc. This may not be easy.

You need:

A zoo!

Hints:

Arrange a field trip to the zoo.

Try this:

Arrange a field trip to a farm. Identify each animal to the child by name, sound it makes, and some special characteristics.

You need:

A nearby farm

Hints:

Arrange a field trip to a farm.

Try this:

Take a bird's nest and take it apart. Identify the materials the nest is made of, such as feathers, sticks, grasses, mud, etc. Are there any people-made materials in the nest?

More:

Moisten bird nest and, place it in a dish and observe it over a period of time to see what small plants appear. Try several different kinds of nests.

You need:

Bird's nest

Try this:

Put an ant farm together and observe the ants over a period of time. The children feed them and observe them day by day.

More:

Take children outside and find ant hills to watch.

You need:

Ant farm kit (commercial one works best), white sand, black ants, food

Hints:

Place sand and ants in a plastic or glass box.

Language: Following Direction

Nature Bingo

Try this:
Give each student one card and enough pebbles to fill the pictures on the card. One child is chosen as the "caller" by the teacher. The "caller" names a plant or animal, and the class has to find the object on their card and to place a pebble on it. The "caller" then chooses another child to become the "caller" and the game continues until the cards have been filled with pebbles.

You need:

- Pictures
- Scissors
- Glue
- Cardboard
- Pebbles

Hints:
The class should cut out small pictures of plants and animals from magazines. Glue the pictures to a piece of cardboard the size of a standard size Bingo card, alternating between plants and animals to form three or four rows of pictures. The class will also need to look for small pebbles.

Try this:

One child comes to the front of the room. This person has cards that are color coded on one side. The class is given a set of cards depicting pictures of plants and animals of bright, gay colors. The child at the front of the room calls out a color. The person or persons with the card of the plants or animals of the color called goes to the front of the room with the cards. The child who has been leader then selects a new person to be the leader. This continues until all of the children have had an opportunity to be the leader, or until all of the cards have been used up.

You need:

Color cards

Plant and animal cards made from magazine pictures

From My Window I Can See

Try this:

This is an activity that can take place whenever something new or interesting can be seen out the classroom window.

1. Call the children to the window and point to the object or person within view.

2. Name it or ask the children to. Talk about what is going on.

3. Encourage the children to notify you and others when they see an activity or a new sight. Call others to come see and talk about it.

Try this:

Write safety words in large print on large pieces of tagboard. Tape on trees. Divide students into teams for a relay race. Give each person a small card with a safety word on it (persons first in each line should have the same word, second the same word, etc.). They must run to the tree with the same word as the small card they were given.

More:

1. Just tell the students which word to run to.
2. Color code each word, using white cards and different color pens.

You need:

Large tagboard cards with safety words printed on them
Small cards (1 for each student) with safety words
Tape

Fun With Colors and Shapes

Try this:

This game can be played inside or on a paved area outside.

Lay down large pieces of different colored construction paper. Teacher has the pupils walk around them in a circle. Teacher calls "stop." Then calls a color. Everyone stands by the color. Check to see if all are correct.

Later add shapes all of one color, then shapes of different colors.

You need:

Different colors of construction paper

Attending

Binoculars

Try this:
1. Fasten two potato chip cans together with masking tape.
2. Glue vinyl wallpaper around them. Tie with yarn or string.
3. Go outside and look around at trees and plants.

More:
1. Use one for a telescope.
2. Fasten cellophane over ends with rubber bands.
3. Make holes around top and string to hold around neck.

You need:
- Two potato chip cans or other tubing for each child
- Vinyl wallpaper
- White glue
- Can opener
- String or yarn
- Hammer and nail

Hints:
Remove bottom from cans. Wash cans.

Awareness

See With Your Hand

Try this:

Sit in a circle; blindfold students. Have a number of objects in the center on the ground (flower, piece of bark, rocks, dirt, sand). One student at a time goes to the center and chooses an item. What is it and how does it feel?

You need:

Items with different textures (sand, flower, rock, bark, etc.)

Blindfolds

Hints:

Vocabulary depends on what skills you are stressing and language ability.

Awareness: Auditory and Tactile

Follow Your Ears

Try this:

Blindfold a student. Give him/her verbal directions to get to a certain object. She/he must then tell what the object is by touching it.

You need:

Blindfolds

Increase Observation Skills Scavenger Hunt

Try this:
1. Teacher reads a list of items to be found outdoors.
2. Give a paper bag to each child.
3. Go for a walk to find the materials. Teacher needs to remind pupils of items to collect.
4. Make a collage of material found.

More:
Paste the objects on a cardboard and have them go out and find them.

You need:

Paper bags

Hints:
Teacher should scout area for available items.

Motor: Gross

Lemon Relay Race

Try this:

Divide the group into two teams. Designate two goals several feet apart. Demonstrate pushing a lemon with a yardstick while walking. Try to keep in contact with the lemon at all times. No hitting it.

The first player pushes the lemon to the finish line and lays down the stick, runs back and taps the next player who runs to the finish line and pushes the lemon back.

You need:

Lemon, orange, or grapefruit
Yardstick
Chalk

Hints:

Mark two goals. Use chalk on paved area or something else such as fences or trees.

Attending: Follow Directions Listen and Do

Try this:

Practice auditory memory skills outside. Give a 2-4 step direction involving gross motor skills which require knowledge of natural objects. Ex: Walk around the tree, skip to the road, touch the blue flower, return to your place.

Sounds in Silence

Try this:

Play a recording of outdoor sounds. Have students point to the picture which shows the sound.

More:

Play a series of sounds. Students put pictures in correct order of the sounds they heard.

You need:

- Pictures of outdoor things which make sounds (birds, waterfall, cars, trucks, kids playing)
- Recording of outdoor sounds
- Tape recorder

Try this:

1. Take a simple snack outside.
2. All sit on the grass in a group or circle.
3. The children are to remain seated with the group until the snack is finished and the teacher gives permission to get up.

More:

Instead of having a snack, enjoyable toys can be taken outside.

You need:

Simple snack

Hints:

Survey the area and select an appropriate spot for the snack.

Social

Team Race

Try this:

1. Pick two or more teams, each with a leader.
2. Pupils line up behind their leader at the starting line. Each child holds the belt or waist of the child in front of him.
3. At a given signal the teams race to the finish line.
4. The pupils who let go, or break the line, are out. Team to finish with the most pupils, wins.

You need:

Chalk

Hints:

Mark off a starting and finishing line.

Nature Picture

Try this:

Have children collect items from outside (such as feathers, leaves, grass, seeds, milkweed pods, etc.) and bring them to one place--inside or out. Give the items to colored paper to make a design or a picture.

Really scout around to find a variety of unique items.

You need:

Paper and glue

Hints:

Be sure there are a variety of items in the area to be used on paper.

Motor: Gross

Shakers

Try this:
1. Collect small rocks outdoors.
2. Decorate a potato chip can with wallpaper, gift wrap, or construction paper. Put in rocks.
3. Glue on plastic lid.
4. Use outside for rhythm band.

More:
Punch two holes on each side of top and string with yarn for a handle.

You need:

Potato chip cans or mailing tubes
Paper, glue and rocks
Hammer and nail
Yarn or string

Hints:
Wash cans.

Language: Expression

Nature: We Hear You

Try this:

Take the class on a walk to listen for sounds we hear in nature (birds, small animals, running water, crickets, wind). The children should try to identify as many sounds as possible, using short sentences to express their ideas.

Motor: Gross

How Fast Do I Move?

Try this:

1. Take the class to a grassy hill.

2. Give instructions for the following:
   a. Run down the hill
   b. Walk down the hill
   c. Skip down the hill
   d. Hop down the hill
   e. Roll up the hill

More:

A hill is not necessary.

One child or the whole class may participate at one time.

Colors Around Us

Try this:

Pick out specific colors.

Sit outside in a circle.

1. Name all the different colors you see.
2. Name all the things you see which are a certain color.
3. Compare 2 things which are the same color, but different shades (leaf, grass).

Try this:
Using a card with a series of pictures, give each individual or group a card, and have students look for and collect the items on their card. Set a time limit and area boundaries. The first to return with the correct items is the winner.

More:
1. Be specific on items to collect (red leaf).
2. Collect a certain number of each item.
3. Easier method--paste the items on a card and have the students match items to their cards.

You need:
Cards with pictures of nature items on them (1 per student).
Sacks to carry items in.
Whistle, to call time when students are to return.
Clock.

Hints:
Paste pictures of nature objects or paste actual objects on cards.

Try this:

Go outside. Show the children a number card. Have children collect that number of small natural objects. The first child to bring the teacher the correct number of objects is the winner.

You need:

1. Number cards etc.

Try this:

Play riddles. "I am long, skinny, and green. What am I?" Grass? A snake? A cattail? or...?

Hints:

Do this outside.

Awareness: Tactile

Mystery Box

Try this:
Have children sit in a circle. The teacher passes a box filled with outdoor materials the children have collected (rocks, twigs, grass, flowers, pine cones, etc.). Each child has a separate turn. Each child should be allowed to feel three items. If he/she can correctly identify the items through touch, then he/she gets to pass the box around. Those children who do not succeed should be given verbal encouragement.

More:
Nonverbal children are instructed to reach in the box and get a _____. The child takes out that object and looks at it.

You need:
Cardboard box with a hole in the top large enough for a child to put his/her hand in
Materials found out-of-doors (rocks, grass, twigs, pebbles, etc.)

Hints:
The class should go on a walk to collect items to go in the Mystery Box (rocks, grass, twigs, pebbles, etc.) The teacher needs to get a small cardboard box and to put a hole in the lid.

Try this:

1. Label a teacher-prepared map of the school grounds.
2. Tour the grounds as you label map.

More:

More able students may copy teacher's map.

You need:

Teacher-made map of the grounds.

Awareness: Tactile

Hot or Cold?

Try this:

In bare feet, walk on different surfaces and determine which is hot and which is cold.

Hints:

Check area to be used for sharp objects and glass.

Try this:

The children will roll a ball to a designated person.

More:

Roll the ball on different levels and surfaces such as grass, cement, asphalt, gravel.

Try this:

1. The children sit in a circle on the ground.
2. Each child removes his/her shoes and puts them in the center of the circle.
3. On the command, each child finds his/her own shoes and puts them on.

More:

If putting shoes on is too difficult, the children may retrieve them and take them back to their place.

Hints:

Survey the area and select a suitable spot.

I Can Find It

Try this:

1. Instruct the children to look for named objects in nature, such as trees, flowers, dirt, leaves, rocks, sticks, grass.

2. Instruct them to touch the objects they find.

Hints:

Survey the area and select a suitable spot.

Try this:

Go outside. Have children collect small natural objects. Each child counts objects. Take one number card from bag. The child who has that number of objects is the winner.

You need:

1. Paper bags.
2. Number cards [1] [2] [3] etc.

How Many Knots?

Try this:

1. Teacher shouts a number between 1 and 10.
2. Children are to use measuring twine to measure different objects outside, i.e. sidewalk, trees, classmates.
3. The first child to find an object which matches number the teacher shouts is the winner.

You need:

1. Twines with knots tied every 12 inches.

Try this:

1. Practice crossing roads by looking both ways before walking across the street.

2. Practice walking on the correct side of the road, when there isn't a sidewalk.

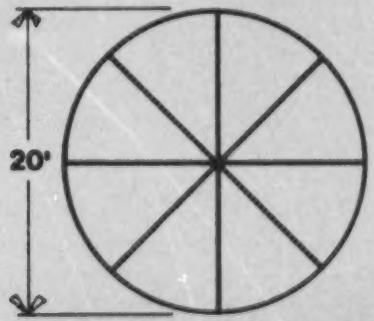
3. When playing games, if someone needs to go across the road, see if students remember to look before crossing.

Try this:

On prepared lines, one child is "It." All children must walk on lines. "It" can tag anyone, but everyone must stay on lines.

Hints:

Use lines on tennis court or draw lines on paved surface with chalk.



Try this:

Go outside and have each student collect several objects of just one kind (grasses, dandelions, leaves). Return to the group and, one at a time, have the students count what they collected. Pick out the number which matches the objects collected.

You need:

Numeral cards

Motor: Fine

Untie The Knot

Try this:

Divide the group into two teams. Use a long rope for each team with a knot tied for each pupil. The first player unties the first knot, then hands the rope to the next pupil, etc. The team that finishes first wins.

You need:

Two long ropes

Hints:

Let the pupils observe the knots being tied.

Awareness: Tactile

Toe Painting

Try this:

Take all the children outside. Let them take their shoes and socks off. Spread finger painting paper on the ground in front of each child. Spread paint on the paper and either have the child walk over it or sit down and smear it around with his feet. Let children walk on grass to get the paint off and then wash feet in bucket.

You need:

Bucket of water
Towel
Wash cloth
Finger paints
Finger paint paper

Hints:

Find a smooth grassy area to work on.

Try this:

Let the children roll down a grassy hill.

More:

Let the children roll on a flat ground.

Let the children roll up the hill.

Try this:

Demonstrate effect of absence of light on plants.

1. Place a small board over grass in sunny area.
2. Place a small board over grass in shady area.
3. Check the grass under the board every day for several days.
4. Compare

You need:

Two small boards

Hints:

Grassy area with sun and shade.

Try this:

1. Have children sit in shade for about 5 minutes.
2. Have children sit in sunshine for about 5 minutes.
3. What do they notice?
4. Which do they like best?

Hints:

A sunny day!

Awareness: Visual Acuity

Who Is That?

Try this:
Hang an old sheet from a clothesline or rope. Place a lamp several feet behind it so that it shines directly onto the sheet. Have child stand or act out between sheet and light. Other children guess: Who is that? What is she/he doing?

More:
Have them act out an animal and ask other children to guess what animal it is.

You need:

Old sheet
Clothesline
Clothespins
Lamp

Hints:
Stretch line and hang sheet. Place lamp. Have fun!

Try this:

Go outdoors and dig some soil. Place lima beans in a container filled half way with soil. Fill the remainder with soil, but do not pack firmly. Water the soil in the containers, and set half of the number of containers on the window sill and half of them in a closet. Observe and water all of the plants frequently. What happens?

You need:

Lima beans, soil, milk cartons, water

Hints:

The children are to bring in a packet of lima beans. The children are to save their milk cartons from the cafeteria.

Awareness: Laterality

Hand Shadows

Try this:

Have the children put their hand on the plate of the overhead projector. Have another child identify the hand as left or right. Palms may be up or down or both hands criss-crossed. The chalkboard makes a good game board.

More:

Try this outdoors on a sunny day. Use the sidewalk as the game board.

You need:

Overhead projector
Chalkboard

Hints:

Select suitable place.

Try this:

Go outside. One person is "It." To make someone else "It," the child must step on another person's shadow.

More:

1. Place child near a tree and mark his shadow on the walk with chalk. Go back at another time and mark and compare shadows.

Hints:

To be used on a sunny day.

Motor: Fine

Egg Carton Garden

Try this:

1. Have the children help paint sections of egg carton and lid in a variety of bright colors. Let dry.
2. Fill each container with dirt, plant seeds, and water the pots. Put all containers into the lid and set in a warm, sunny, place.
3. Every day have the children look at the pots of dirt and notice that there is just dirt. On the day the first sprout appears, point out that it's different from before.
4. Watch it daily.

More:
Eggshells may be substituted for egg carton. Both egg shells and egg carton can be planted if unpainted.

You need:

Paint (water proof)
Paint brushes
Dirt
Seeds

Hints:
A light, warm, sunny area, cut top off egg carton and divide the egg carton into six sections, each with two egg holders. Poke holes in each ccntainer for drainage.

Try this:

Give every child a paper bag or have one for all. Have children collect pretty rocks, leaves, pone cones, seeds or other interesting items. Bring all back to the room and set up a display.

Stress following directions and labeling while finding items. Ex. - "Bobby, see the rock. Pick up the rock."

You need:

Paper bag

Hints:

Be sure there are items in the area.

Science

Big and Small, Short and Tall

Try this:

Choose a flower, compare its size to other flowers. Is it bigger or smaller? Is it shorter or taller? Compare length and width of grass using your fingers as a measure.

You need:

Flowers and grass

Hints:

Choose place on grounds that is most suitable.

Motor: Fine

Leaf Critter

Try this:

Go outside and choose one colored leaf that is not overly dry. Bring leaf inside and glue it on a sheet of paper. Draw on a circle for its head, add head parts, arms and legs.

You need:

Paste
Paper
Pencil or crayon
Leaves

Numbers: Time

Fall Bulbs - Spring Blooms

Try this:
Plant spring blooming bulbs in the fall. Students look for bulbs in catalogs and make choices. Choose a planting location. It doesn't have to be sunny, because spring bulbs bloom before leaves are on trees.
Dig a hole at least six inches deep.
Plant bulb, cover well.
Mark location.
Observe growth and blooming in spring.
Record the time between planting and blooming with a calendar.

More:
Map the locations.

You need:

Catalogs
Bulbs
Bulb planting tool

Hints:
Either order bulbs from a catalog source or purchase them from a garden supply store.

Numbers: Time

Water Garden

Try this:

This activity will show how seeds need water to develop.

Cut paper towel into size of baggie and fold in half.

Place three seeds inside, fold and dampen well.

Put towel into baggie and stample at sides. Put two tablespoonsful of water in baggie. Pin to bulletin board and watch for growth. Be sure to keep the garden moist!

You need:

Pumpkin seeds
Lunch baggies
Paper towels
Water
Staples

Motor: Fine

Sand Flowers

Try this:

Have children draw outlines of flowers which vary in size. Put small amounts of sand into paper cups or similar containers. Have the students put four or five drops of food color in the sand, mixing it thoroughly. Allow the sand to dry. In the last step the students will fill in the outlines of the flowers with the colored sand. Use small amounts of paste to fill the flower outlines to hold the sand.

You need:

Sand, food colors, construction paper, pencil, small containers, paste

Hints:

Go on a nature walk so that the children can get the sand for this activity. The teacher should bring in food colors.

Try this:

Using small twigs for construction, the students will paste shapes of houses on construction paper. The pupils should write their addresses on the houses using a pencil. Some of the pupils may need some help with pasting.

You need:

Construction paper, paste, small twigs, pencil

Hints:

Pupils need to bring in small twigs collected during nature walks.

Motor: Fine

Leaf Silhouette

Try this:

The teacher takes the class on a walk to collect green leaves of various shapes. Cut the flaps from cardboard boxes into equal squares, one for each student. Children place the leaves on the cardboard flaps and trace the shapes using a pencil. The teacher cuts out the shapes of the leaves. The pupils use tempera paint and small brushes to paint the shapes of the leaves.

You need:

Flaps from cardboard boxes, paint brushes, various shapes of leaves, pencils, tempera paint, sharp instrument for cutting

Hints:

The teacher brings to school flaps from cardboard boxes used by supermarkets. The insides of these flaps are corrugated.

Motor: Fine

Leaf Window

Try this:

The teacher should tear off square sheets of wax paper and give two pieces to each student. The students should place the large leaf on one piece of the wax paper, and cover the leaf with the piece of wax paper that is left. Staple around the ledges of the wax paper enclosing the leaf. Tape these in the window pane using a clear tape. Use a clear glue to hold the leaves in place if they slip.

You need:

Large green leaves, wax paper, stapler and staples, tape, glue

Hints:

Take the children on a walk to look for large green leaves, bring to school a box of wax paper.

Try this:

Take all children out for a walk. As the group is walking have them point out items such as a tree or a flower or a rock. Identify each item and make sure each child sees it and touches it. If they speak, have them say the name.

Hints:

An area with necessary nature objects.

Try this:

Children will make field trips in the fall to observe the changes that take place in leaves. Collect assorted leaves of different colors.

More:

Trace leaves as an art project.

You need:

Leaves

Try this:

Children become more aware of trees by comparing size, measuring and feeling bark.

1. Measure tree by comparing it with child's height.
2. Measure with tape and/or by placing arms or hands around it.
3. Compare the tree size to another tree, a twig, flower stem, etc.

You need:

Trees - young and old, tall and short

Hints:

Locate desirable trees.

Try this:

1. Show the children a big tree and a small tree. Have them look at and touch each, and try to see the top.

2. Have the children stretch tall on tip toes, arms above head and be tall or big. Then stoop down and be small.

More:

Use several objects such as rocks, bushes, and children to compare heights.

Hints:

Survey the area and choose a place where plants and other objects of differing heights are to be found.

Try this:
Determining the length of time it takes for an orange seed to start to grow.

1. Collect orange seeds from lunch or home.
2. Children go outside and collect rocks and soil in paper bag.
3. Rocks, soil, and orange seeds are put in container with hole in bottom.
4. Pupils water seeds and keep track of time from date of planting to plants.

You need:
Three or four orange seeds for each child, cups with hole in bottom, rocks for bottom of cup, trowel or small shovel or spoon to dig soil, paper bags, calendar to record time, pitcher of water.

Hints:
Survey area for places for small rocks and soil or bring from other area. Seeds may be collected from oranges served at lunch or from home. Have an area in the room set aside to keep cups after seeds are planted.

Try this:

Students collect sacks of leaves. Empty sacks and sort leaves by size: big - little.

More:

Have more than two sizes. Sort by color. Sort by shape or leaf formations.

You need:

Leaves

Try this:

Save pumpkin, squash, cantalope and watermelon seeds. Place the seeds in a jar with water and food coloring. Remove them in a few days and dry on newspapers. Store in dry glass jars. You now have a supply to make seed pictures when ever you wish. Add some sunflower seeds for effect.

You need:

Seeds
Food coloring
Jars
Newspapers

Awareness: Tactile

Rough or Smooth

Try this:

Tree trunk or bark is rough, new leaf smooth. Have each student feel each object. Repeat "bark is rough, leaf is smooth." Ask child to give you the rough one. Be sure she/he feels it. Use a blindfold to check this out.

You need:

Items of different textures: rough/smooth

Root Box

Try this:

Place a viewing box on a shelf and plant assorted seeds. Watch the roots grow.

You need:

Box, 12 in. x 18 in. and 4 in. wide. Two sides are of clear plastic or glass. It could be larger or smaller.

Seeds

Soil

Hints:

Prepare with children helping.

Try this:

Take the pupils on a nature walk to collect such items as flowers, leaves, sticks, stones, rocks, etc. The children should sit on the grass and sort the items according to color.

You need:

Whatever can be found by the class on the nature walk.

Hints:

The teacher should check the area being used for the nature walk to look for hazardous conditions that might exist--fallen branches, open holes, etc., and to determine the possibilities of finding the materials needed for the activity.

Try this:

1. Tell children to find a flower with specific number of petals.

You need:

Area with several types of flowers

Motor: Fine

Plaster Leaf Print

Try this:

1. Gather leaves outside.
2. Put grease on paper plates. (None needed if using milk cartons.)
3. Mix water in plaster of Paris to pouring consistency. Pour into mold.
4. After it hardens a little, press a leaf on it firmly and remove.
5. Insert hairpin for hanger.
6. When dry, remove and paint.

You need:

Leaves, small fluted paper plates or milk cartons cut off an inch from the bottom, plaster of Paris, water, container to mix it in, petroleum jelly, hairpin, paints.

Nature's Numbers

Try this:

Give the student a can with a specific number of objects in it (using the numbers that you are working with). Example: one leaf, two twigs, three flowers, etc. Hold up the beaded number card without telling the child what the number is. The child looks into the can to find the number of objects indicated. Do this until you have completed all of the numbers that you want the child to know. Reward the child for success by verbal praise.

You need:

Leaves, grass, tree twigs, sticks, flowers, open-top can

Hints:

The class should go on a walk prior to this activity, identifying and collecting things we see in nature: trees, leaves, grass, flowers, etc. The teacher needs a medium size, open-top can, beaded number cards.

The Nose Knows

Try this:

1. Go outside and smell the air after it rains.
2. Smell grass, flowers, dirt.
3. Does this thing have a smell? (rock, flower, grass)
4. Is the smell good or bad?
5. Compare smell of flowers to perfume.

You need:

Perfume

Try this:

Soak a package of dried peas for at least six hours. Be sure they are covered by water. Get a box or two of round toothpicks. Stick the toothpicks into the peas; they will serve as connectors. Build houses, buildings, shapes. As the peas dry, they will make a strong joint. Houses may be covered with tissue paper.

You need:

Dried peas
Round toothpicks
Large bowl
Water

Hints:

Soak peas overnight or at least 6-7 hours. Be sure they are covered by at least an inch of water.

Motor: Fine

Plants and Paste

Try this:

1. Take the children outdoors and ask them to pick up small natural objects such as rocks, twigs, leaves, seeds, pods, etc., and to put them into a bag.
2. Return to the classroom and gather around a table.
3. Give each a sheet of heavy paper. Each child is to choose several of the found objects and glue them on his/her paper.

More:

The natural objects may be glued on in designs or patterns.

You need:

Bag, heavy paper for each child, glue

Hints:

Survey the area to be sure there is a diverse array of small natural objects to be found.

Numbers

Colors

Try this:

1. Give students a color card (ex. green). Have them take the card with and find something the same color as their card (grass, leaves).

2. Show students a green card for a few seconds.

3. Tell students to find something green.

You need:

Color cards, paint chips

Hints:

Be sure there are materials outside that match the colors you want the students to find.

Try this:

1. Show the children a picture of a tree, flower, etc.
2. Ask them to point to one like it in the outdoor environment.

You need:

Pictures of objects the teacher knows will be in the area in which the activity will take place.

Awareness: Visual

Lucky Clovers

Try this:

Go outside and hunt for four-leaf clovers.

Hints:

Locate an area with clover.

Science: Plant Growth

Terrarium for the Classroom

Try this:

1. Gather plants with leaf mold, moss, small pieces of wood, rocks.
2. Put pieces of moss on bottom of container upsidedown. Add rocks, peat moss and plants. Put a few pieces of charcoal on the moss.
3. Pour in water. Add small, ceramic animals.
4. Seal with plastic wrap and put in a cool window.

You need:

Glass jar, fish bowl, or aquarium, plants with leaf mold, mosses, bird gravel or rocks, peat moss, a few pieces of charcoal, plastic wrap, long handled spoon, container for water.

Try this:

Children will visit an outdoor area and find three or four different kinds of seeds. Example: pine cones, milkweed pods. Classify them according to how they travel--air, hitch-hikers, pop from plants.

You need:

Assorted seeds

Try this:

Demonstrate effect of water on plants.

1. Place two plants in same window sill.
2. Water only one plant.
3. Record on calendar.
4. Observe differences in two plants as time passes.

You need:

Two small plants

Peanut Butter Snack for the Birds

Try this:

1. Mix peanut butter with cornmeal or oats.
2. Use a knife to spread it on pine cones.
3. Tie a string around each cone.
4. Go for a walk and tie the pine cones to bushes and low tree limbs.
5. Watch for birds.

You need:

Pine cones, peanut butter, oats or cornmeal, knife, string.

Science: Dexterity and Coordination

Make a Diorama

Try this:

Take an empty tissue box with the window intact on the top. Cut around three sides of the bottom of the box. Fold down--this will be the back of the scene. Choose seasonal pictures from cards and magazines. Mount in box. Cover opening with plastic. Close back of box.

You need:

Kleenex box
Cards
Magazines
Crayons or paint
Rocks, shells, etc.

Hints:

Discuss type of diorama.

Discuss scale of pictures.

Experiment while building.

Motor: Fine

Pussy Willow Rabbits

Try this:

1. Find pussy willow branches or bring them from home.
2. Let pupils trace rabbit pattern on oak tag. Pupils or teachers can cut out rabbits.
3. Gently lift off each catkin from branch.
4. Spread white glue on rabbit.
5. Press catkins into glue.

You need:

Pussy willow branches, oak tag, rabbit pattern, white glue

Try this:

Use flannel board to illustrate clothes for warm and cold weather. Help students differentiate between warm and cold by putting their hands out the window, placing their hand on a radiator, feeling the warmth from the sun or feeling warm and cold water from bathroom faucets.

You need:

Flannel board
Two figures--one dressed for cold and one for hot weather

Try this:

Either use large cut-out dolls with cut-out clothes or use pictures of clothes. Have the children decide what to wear in various kinds of weather. If you have the dolls, have the children put the clothes on them or have them select the picture of what clothes are appropriate.

Example: If it's cold, have them select a warm coat, mittens, a hat, etc.

You need:

Pictures of clothes (seasonal clothes) or
Cut-out dolls with seasonal clothes

Awareness

Falling Leaves

Try this:

Rake piles of leaves, kick, tumble, bury one another, feel, smell, listen to the noise the leaves make.

You need:

Leaves

Hints:

Locate safe area where there is no dangerous litter or debris.

Try this:

A table game to help the pupil identify the characteristics of each season.

Print name of season at top of each large card.

Glue seasonal pictures on small cards.

File in a large manila envelope.

You need:

Four cardboard cards 6 x 8
Sixteen cardboard cards 3 x 4
Seasonal pictures - cards
Wildlife stamps, magazines

Weatherperson

Try this:

Use the daily weather to teach the children about the weather. Make up a calendar with large spaces for each day. Cover it with clear contact paper.

Make weather symbols. Example: a sun with a smiley face for a sunny day, a cloud with raindrops for a rainy day, etc.

Each day have the children notice the weather. Discuss it. Assign one child each day to be the "weatherperson." Select the weather symbol which fits the day. Then help place it on the calendar on the proper day.

You need:

Calendar covered with contact paper
Weather symbols backed with tape

Try this:

Collect snow and frozen soil, let children feel the cold. Melt it. Observe soil becoming moist and then softening. After melting, feel textures of soil and melting snow.

You need:

Snow and frozen soil

Try this:

Bring in branches from early-blooming plants. Place the stems in water in a warm place to force the leaves and blossoms (pussy willow, forsythia, flowering crab). Keep a record of the number of days that pass before they bloom.

You need:

Branches, jar and water

Motor: Fine Skills

Weed Seed Art

Try this:

Go outside and gather dry weeds (some with roots), seeds, and leaves for a picture.

Let pupils pick favorite color for background. Glue seeds, plants, and leaves on paper. Dot open areas with glue and sprinkle on bits of colored tissue paper. Cover with plastic wrap and staple on a black paper frame.

You need:

Dry weeds, seeds, and leaves, construction paper, tissue paper, stapler.

Hints:

Survey area for dry weeds and leaves. Cut black construction paper frames.

Science

Watching Trees

Try this:

Select a tree for the class to observe during the school year (at least four times). Visit or observe tree. Draw a picture as a record of seasonal changes.

You need:

Tree, crayon, drawing paper

Awareness: Spring

Egg Shell Pictures

Try this:

Students place egg shells on the window sills and watch the warm sunlight dry them out during the day. After the shells have dried out, use water colors to paint them in a variety of pastel shades. Glue the pieces of painted egg shells to make pictures that have been outlined on construction paper.

You need:

Egg shells, water colors, paint brushes, glue, pictures outlined on construction paper

Hints:

Teacher and pupils bring egg shells from home. The teacher outlines pictures on construction paper.

Numbers

Sand Numbers

Try this:

The class needs to go on a walk to fill medium size containers with dry sand. Use cardboard squares size 9 in. by 11 in. to write the numbers from 1 to 10, using a separate card for each number. Use any type of commercial glue to trace over the numbers that have been written in pencil. Before the glue dries, sprinkle the sand over the numbers, shaking off any excess. Allow all of the numbers to dry. The finished product of this activity will be hard, raised numbers made of sand, which serves for good tactile experiences in learning to read numbers understandably.

You need:

Sand, commercial type glue, size 9 in. by 12 in. paper, pencils

Hints:

The teacher should be sure that an area is available for obtaining sand.

Awareness: Tactile

Sand Play

Try this:

Sit around a sand pile. Let the children sift through the sand with fingers and toes. They can pour sand into containers or from container to container.

More:

Wet the sand and build a castle.

You need:

Bucket of water
Empty containers
Small hand shovel

Try this:

Collect and examine sand, garden soil and clay by looking at them and feeling them.

You need:

Three small containers

Hints:

Locate sand, garden soil and clay.

Awareness

Does It Hold Water?

Try this:

1. Pack each of three soil types into funnels until they are about 2/3 full.
2. Hold funnels over dishpan.
3. Pour water on the soils.
4. What happens?

More: Compare times for water to run through each soil type.

You need:

One cup damp sand
One cup clay soil
One cup garden soil
Dishpan
Three funnels
Water

Hints:

Collect soil samples.

Motor: Fine

Sand Drawing

Try this:

1. Students play in sand to become familiar with its texture.
2. Have students draw different shapes in the sand.
3. Have students print their names, numbers, etc. in sand.

You need:

Sand

Motor: Fine

Sand Sculptures

Try this:

Put sand in a dishpan, add enough water to make it damp.

1. Have kids play in damp sand to become familiar with its texture.
2. Make a round ball from the sand and then roll it between their hands.
3. Then have them hold the ball between their hands and flatten it by pushing their hands together.
4. Build something in the sand: a house, a sandperson, etc.

More:

Could also use mud.

You need:

Sand, water, dishpan

Awareness: Tactile

Barefoot in the Park

Try this:

Let the children take off their shoes and socks. Allow them to walk from the classroom to a grassy spot. Help them to notice the smooth coolness of the tile floor, the rough hot cement, and the cool soft grass.

More:

Allow children to walk through mud.

Hints:

Preview the area to be sure there are no dangerous objects (such as broken glass).

Motor: Fine

Soil Art

Try this:

Take children outside and dig up some soil. Fill the bucket with soil. Give each child some soil, wet it and help them make a sculpture, a hand print, or anything. Return items to the room and set in a very sunny, warm, window to "bake." (Dry it very slowly.)

More:

Find natural clay and use it for sculptures.

You need:

Empty bucket
Water
Soil - in a place you can dig a hole
Small hand shovel

Hints:

Find a warm sunny spot.
Make sure the soil is not too sandy.

Try this:

1. Put board in dishpan on incline.
2. Put soil on board.
3. Pour water over soil.
4. Repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 using sod instead of soil.
5. Compare.

You need:

Four cups of soil
4 in. x 6 in. section of sod
8 in. x 12 in. board
Dishpan
Water

Try this:

Demonstrate expansion of water when freezing.

1. Mark jar about half way with magic marker.
2. Fill jar to mark with water.
3. Place jar in freezer or on window sill in winter.
4. When frozen, observe and discuss change in water level.

You need:

Narrow glass jar, i.e. olive jar
Magic marker
Water

Try this:

Fill a glass half full of water. Let the child drop rocks of various sizes into the glass, beginning with the smaller ones and increasing in size. The children can observe that the various size rocks cause the level of the water to raise. Which rocks increase the water level the most? The least?

You need:

Glass or cup, water, pebbles, rocks

Hints:

The children need to go on a nature walk looking for different size rocks. The teacher needs to provide a cup or glass.

Try this:

Demonstrate amount of water in snow.

1. Fill jar with snow.
2. Bring in room and allow to thaw.
3. Observe change in volume.

You need:

Glass jar
Snow

Try this:

Put a few drops of food coloring in container. Thread needle and push through plastic lid. Fill container with water, put lid on and hand in window. Watch colored light on walls and floor.

You need:

Empty containers with plastic lid
String
Large needle
Food coloring
Water

Try this:

Cover the bottom of a glass container or a clear plastic fish tank with small rocks. Arrange shells in the tank and fill with water. Tint the water with blue food coloring. Keep on window sill. Watch what happens. What care does it need?

You need:

- Fish bowl, aquarium, or large mayonaise jars
- Shells - snail, clam (purchase other shells from a store or museum)
- Food coloring
- Rocks

Try this:

Demonstrate evaporation.

1. Boil water.
2. Observe steam.
3. Hold lid over steam and allow water beads to form.
4. What is happening?

You need:

Sauce pan and tea kettle
Pan lid
Water
Heating element

Try this:

Demonstrate buoyancy.

1. Fill bucket with water.
2. Put a jar in water with lid on.
3. Put other jar in water without lid.
4. Allow second jar to sink.
5. Remove second jar <u>full</u> of water and put lid on.
6. Compare weights of jar full of air and jar full of water.

You need:

Bucket
Water
Two baby food jars with lids
Balance or scale (optional)

Science

Will It Sink?

Try this:

Demonstrate buoyancy.

1. Fill bucket with water.
2. Put different natural materials collected from the outdoors in the water.

You need:

Bucket
Water
Cork
Twigs
Small stones
Leaves
Sand

Try this:

Develop awareness of water types.

1. Collect water samples from:
   a. running stream
   b. muddy mud puddle
   c. mud puddle on paved surface
   d. tap water

2. Strain water samples through cheese cloth.

3. Examine material, if any, left in cheese cloth.

You need:

Small jars
Cheese cloth
Bucket to catch strained water
Clean dust pan to collect water from paved surface

Science

Eye Spy

Try this:

Develop awareness of water types.

1. Collect water samples from:
   a. running stream
   b. mud puddle
   c. tap water

2. Examine types of water with magnifying glass.

3. What do you see?

You need:

Small glass jars
Magnifying glass

It's Gone

Try this:

Demonstrate evaporation.

1. Mark jars about half way up with magic marker.
2. Fill jars to mark with water.
3. Set jars in window.
4. After a day or two, examine water level.

You need:

Glass jars
Magic marker
Water

Science

Catch It

Try this:

Demonstrate evaporation.

1. Fill jars half full of water.
2. Put saran wrap over top.
3. Fasten saran wrap with rubber band.
4. Place jars in window.
5. Examine later.
6. Discuss

You need:

Glass jars
Saran wrap
Rubber bands
Water

Try this:
Demonstrate some effects of water pollution.
1. Fill dish pan about half full of water.
2. Pour 1/4 cup oil into water.
3. Dip feathers in water.
4. Examine and feel feathers
5. Discuss effects of water pollution on birds.

More:
Compare regular bird feathers with duck feathers.

You need:

Dish pan
Water
Baby oil, or motor oil
Bird feathers

Science

Water Painting

Try this:

Demonstrate evaporation.

1. Children are to paint pictures on chalkboard using water.
2. As water evaporates, discuss what is happening.

You need:

Small containers of water
Paint brushes